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# Official Instruction in The Countries of Middle and Southern America

An Address Delivered at the Annual Meeting of the  
National Association of State Universities

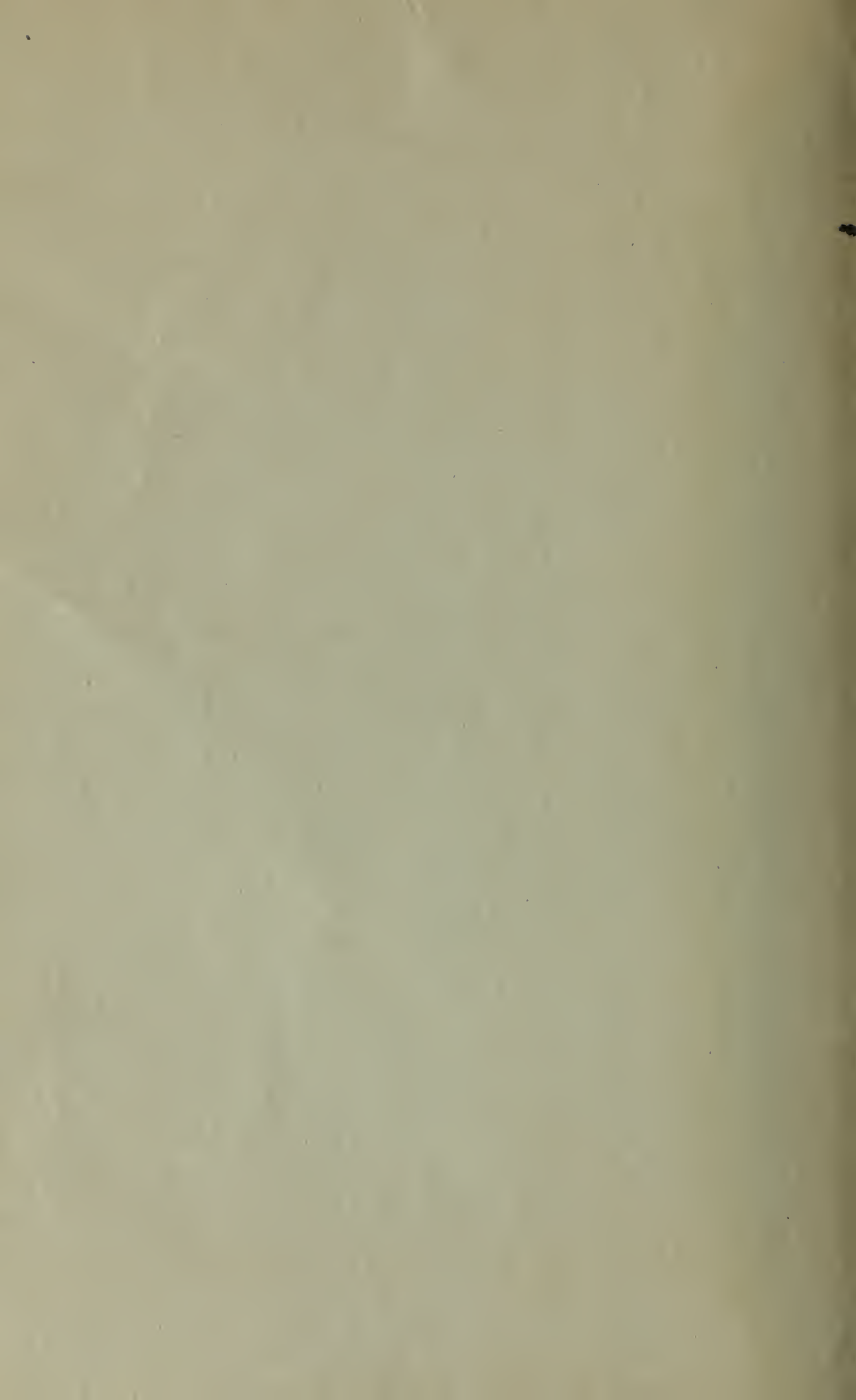
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By Peter H. Goldsmith, Director of the Interamerican  
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## OFFICIAL INSTRUCTION IN THE COUNTRIES OF MIDDLE AND SOUTHERN AMERICA

By Peter H. Goldsmith, Director of the Interamerican  
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### I

#### INTRODUCTION

GENTLEMEN:

That this body of educators, all intensely occupied with local or regional duties and all deeply concerned with professional problems that clamor for consideration, counsel and solution, should invite an outsider to discuss a subject as seemingly alien as that indicated by the title of this address is but another evidence of the catholicity of interests and thought that has always characterized the presidents and faculties of our state universities. I find myself therefore in an atmosphere of intellectual sympathy and receptivity.

To treat of education, or, more properly, of instruction, in the smallest and least complex of the American republics, with any degree of adequateness, in the compass of an address, obviously would be impossible. How much more so would it be to treat of this subject in twenty republics, some with enormous areas and vast populations, and all with national idiosyncrasies that render them as unlike one another as the nations of Europe, in physical constitutions, populations, civilizations, institutions, national interests and points of view? I must confine myself therefore to presenting a bare outline, accompanied by mere assertions, without proofs or elaborations. I shall try, however, to limit myself to assertions capable of substantiation.

A few words as to terms are necessary.

The term "instruction" is used purposely and by preference to designate that which is taught, what is to



be studied, the teacher's contribution; and, in this sense, it is quite different from "education," which is training, preparation: the result in the learner of instruction, comprehension, reflection and practice. Incidental reference may be made to education in this sense, to the state of society as the result of instruction, but the theme is "instruction" as defined.

In like manner the term "official instruction" is used consciously and by choice, since it is both more accurate and more suggestive than "public instruction" and more convenient in a discussion that deals with the subject in the middle and southern countries of America. "Public instruction," as this term is currently used among us, suggests popular instruction, imparted in primary or secondary schools open to the public, and supported by the people, and not by parents, guardians or pupils. Why we should conceive of it as popular and as limited to grades below the university is not clear. Perhaps we do so from habit, based on the fact that our first, our typical, universities, were neither supported by the public, nor open to the public in the sense that the public could use them without the payment of fees. We seldom think of our two great national schools—the Military Academy at West Point and the Naval Academy at Annapolis—as public schools. Yet they are, in a true sense; for both are supported by the people, and both are open to the public—as far as the public can qualify and can be admitted—without the payment of fees.

The term "official instruction" is preferable to "public instruction," because it is new and therefore has not acquired the more or less rigid implication of "public instruction," and we can employ it with less need of explanation and less likelihood of misapprehension in our study of countries where official instruction, from the kindergarten through the university, is the rule.

By "official instruction" is meant all instruction initiated, administered and controlled by the officers of the people, whether gratuitous or not. It happens that throughout the whole of America official instruction is gratuitous, almost without exception; but it is readily conceivable that it might not be so; and it would in no sense cease to be official if fees were charged.

The United States is characterized by a great variety of official instruction, greater perhaps than any other country in the world. Beginning with the smallest center

of initiative, support, administration and control, we have official instruction in the schools of the towns, counties, municipalities and states—those of the latter being normal, technical or professional schools and universities; and, finally, in national schools, under federal control, almost negligible, and limited, in the main, to the two academies already mentioned.

With us the center of initiative is local or regional. Individuals or groups demand, organize, support and control. This is a fundamental characteristic of our whole system of instruction, and, indeed, of our entire civilization. In regard to the fabric of our official instruction, it might be said that it is like an old-fashioned pieced quilt, made up of a vast number of squares, diamonds, triangles, circles, of different textures, qualities and colors. We have no consciously designed and harmoniously wrought national fabric, because we have no national plan or system, and no national center of initiative, administration and control. We lack a minister or department of instruction. Our Bureau of Education, with the best of intentions, is but a gatherer of information, a modest and hesitating offerer of suggestions, a shadowy afterthought, as it were. Is it not remarkable—to say the least—that the people of all peoples that from the beginning has laid most stress on education should have made absolutely no provision, as a nation, for instruction? This is not a complaint, a censure. To have made federal provision for instruction might have been a mistake. It is as possible that the failure to establish a national department of instruction, with a secretary of instruction in the cabinet, was due rather to wise foresight than to neglect. The result, without such a department, has been astonishingly good; would it have been as good, would it have been better, with it? Who can say?

## II

### THE CENTRAL OR FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS AND OFFICIAL INSTRUCTION

Turning now toward the middle and southern countries of America, we find, in general, a totally different situation. Recognition and appreciation of this difference are essential to the comprehension, first, of the present systems of official instruction that prevail in them;

and, second, of the peculiar difficulties that have attended and continue to attend these systems.

1. *Official instruction as a highly centralized national function.*—Official instruction is a wholly national function in all these countries, with one notable exception—Brazil—which will be discussed separately. In all the republics except Brazil provision is made for instruction by the creation of a national department—*ministerio* or *secretaria*—the head of which holds a place in the cabinet, as follows: Argentina, minister of justice and public instruction; Bolivia, minister of public instruction and agriculture; Colombia, minister of public instruction; Costa Rica, minister of public instruction; Cuba, secretary of public instruction and fine arts; Chile, minister of justice and public instruction; Dominican Republic, secretary of public instruction; Ecuador, minister of public instruction; Guatemala, minister of public instruction; Haiti, minister of public instruction and justice; Honduras, minister of public instruction; Mexico, minister of public instruction; Nicaragua, minister of foreign relations and public instruction; Panama, minister of public instruction; Paraguay, minister of justice and public instruction; Salvador, minister of public instruction; Uruguay, minister of public instruction; Venezuela, minister of public instruction. These departments initiate, administer and control; they appoint, or pass on the appointments of, superintendents, rectors and principals, professors and teachers, and they establish curricula, designate texts and construct buildings. Their authority extends to official instruction of all kinds; in universities, normal schools, colleges (*colegios*, *institutos*, *liceos*—institutions of secondary instruction) and primary schools. All private, group or denominational institutions of instruction are subject to their inspection and supervision. If there are officers in the states, provinces, *departamentos* (the largest territorial and administrative divisions within the nations bear one of these three names), or in the municipalities or towns, they are creatures of and subject to the national departments of instruction. Initiative usually originates with these departments, and if it springs from communities, provinces or states, decisive and institutive action lies with the national departments of instruction. Therefore the systems of instruction are everywhere arterial, that is, the impulse is from the heart, the center, outward into all the ramifications of the national entities and not, as



here, where there are scores of thousands of centers of initiative, support, administration and control.

I give a few illustrations. If the people of a certain *barrio*—a more or less indeterminate demarcation that corresponds with our “ward”—in the city of Jujuy, the capital of a small state of the same name in the extreme north of Argentina, desire an additional primary school, they do not appeal to the state government, nor do they raise the money themselves for the building, and then begin construction, willy-nilly; but they appeal through the municipal and provincial, state or departmental government to the ministry of public instruction in Buenos Aires, the national capital, 1,400 kilometers away; and the result depends entirely on the central body. If the citizens of Punta Arenas, Chile, the southernmost city of the world—a flourishing town of some 25,000 inhabitants—would have a new secondary school for boys, they must request it of the ministry of justice and public instruction in Santiago, 1,500 kilometers away. If granted, it would be supported by the national treasury, and it would be under the direct supervision of the ministry. The present national government of Peru has literally remade the whole system of official instruction in that republic, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars and importing some twenty-five specialists from the United States to reorganize and direct every branch of it.

This characteristic centralization of initiative, administration and support, I am persuaded, was not due to any radical difference between the mental capacities and tendencies of the initiators of the systems of official instruction in these countries and those of the founders of the United States, who left the whole question of instruction to the states, municipalities, towns and counties. Only the circumstances and the habits of the people were different. The systems of official instruction in the middle and southern countries of America grew out of the exigencies of the cases at the time of the attainment of independence, and out of customs already established during the period of incubation, that is, under the colonial regime. During the Spanish regime official instruction was administered either by the crown or by the church, from the colonial center outward in each region. The official representatives of the mother-country—directly or through the church, or occasionally by merely holding aloof and encouraging, and giving free scope to, ecclesiastical initia-

tive and administration—determined the extent and character of instruction, the location of institutions and the personnel. In every region, naturally, the number of Europeans was small, at first. Groups of white men established themselves where they could secure a foothold. They were surrounded by great numbers of aborigines, to whom they were aliens, intruders and enemies. The Spanish conquerors and masters, after taking thought for their own safety and their material wants, made provision for their spiritual needs and the intellectual requirements of their children, the creoles. With creditable prevision and energy, they established for them primary and secondary schools, and, in most regions, universities. Notable instances of the latter were the universities in Santo Domingo, Mexico, Lima, Bogota and Cordoba. As in Spain, the main stimulus came, however, from the crown and the papal authorities. After schools were provided for the creoles—children of Europeans born in America—the crown and the church made commendable effort to christianize and to educate the Indians—a task so nearly impossible that it is still unaccomplished, after four centuries of greater or less exertion. Instruction was, I think, as extensive and as thorough, however different, and the average of education was as high, among the Europeans and their descendents in the middle and southern countries of America as they were in the United States during the colonial period; and I incline to the opinion that the same is true to-day. It may be fairly said also that more attention was given to the intellectual and technical education of the Indians in the countries we are studying than in the English colonies of North America and later in the United States. The problem of the aborigines was solved very differently in the center and south from what it was in the north. As I have said, the Spaniards strove, according to their lights, to christianize, and, to a certain extent, to educate the indigenes, while at the same time exploiting and maltreating them; our ancestors did not so much exploit—our North American Indians were not readily exploitable—but they pushed them back, cheated them, robbed them, slew them directly or indirectly, and dispossessed them and caused them to disappear. Here the Indians soon ceased to be a problem; they vanished. Apart from the later problem of giving instruction to the negroes, our problem, both in colonial times and after independence, was extremely simple; that of merely letting

the people—all of whom were clamoring for instruction, would have it at all hazards, would even fight for it, were willing to pay the price necessary for it—instruct themselves.

Here you have in the mere statement of a difference between populations whole volumes of sociology, philosophy, civics, economics and religion. In this difference between the elements that had to be dealt with in some of the middle and southern countries of America and in the British colonies and later in the United States and Canada is to be found an explanation of a divergence in history and civilization that has extended over three hundred years.

Thus, during the colonial period in the middle and southern countries, tendencies were brought from beyond the seas, systems were implanted and community habits were formed. Independence—in spite of the bloodshed, the painful delays and the sore disappointments that accompanied its attainment—came with comparative suddenness to all the American peoples. In the United States the colonies or provinces had become in a measure self-sufficient and self-instructing prior to independence. After independence we but followed our habits. Besides, we had been thirteen colonies and we became thirteen federated states, with slightly varying traits and tendencies. These thirteen states might have become thirteen separate republics. We stood together, however, as we were contiguous and more or less homogeneous. Our center—successively Philadelphia, New York, Washington—was at first politically remote from each state. We were held together at the beginning by very slight and elastic ties. According to our nature and disposition, each state, each community, went its own way and did for itself what it desired to have done, got for itself what it could get, without giving much thought to the national government.

The middle and southern countries could not form a union. It was materially—not to say politically—impossible. Consequently, when they did establish separate nationalities, the several regions and the several centers of population of each of these nationalities were, as a rule, nearer, physically and politically, to their centers of government than our states, our communities, were to our center. The national governments therefore, from the very nature of the cases and from the beginning, meant more to them; while we, from the mid-colonial period,



have cherished the idea of regional rights, initiative, rivalry, responsibility and independence, voiced constitutionally in "states' rights."

In practice, the nations descended, on their European side, from Spain, inherited the habits and took over the machinery implanted by the mother-country. Either they, as national entities, had to continue the task of instruction, or it would not be continued at all. Provincial or community rights, initiative, responsibility and independence had never been permitted, much less encouraged and developed; and if the national administrations had not made provision for instruction, the probability is that it would have declined rapidly. The several governments undertook to meet the need by providing for the creation of ministries or departments of public instruction. The success of these departments was dependent, in the main, on the character of the population to be instructed.

These elements, varying in degrees and number, according to the country, were as follows: Europeans born, mostly Spanish; creoles, descendants of Europeans, born in America; *mestizos*, crosses between Europeans and Indians; Indians in great variety; octoroons, quadroons, mulattos, negroes; and *zambos*, or crosses between negroes and Indians. With the exception of the European born and the creoles, on one hand, and on the other, the *mestizos*, Indians, mulattos, negroes and *zambos* that had sustained close relations with the Spaniards and creoles in community life—a relatively small number of the population in most of the countries—the people did not desire and have never desired instruction. They lacked at the beginning and they still lack the inherent craving for knowledge and the ambition for economic and social advancement that are the basis of education. Consequently, in most of the countries the process of instruction has always been a constant drive outward from the national center.

2. *Official instruction as a distributed function.*—Brazil, with a territory greater than that of the contiguous territory of the United States, and a population of approximately thirty million inhabitants, is more like the United States than any other American republic, in that, from the beginning, the community and regional spirit has been strong and effective. The historian observes that very early in the development of a European



civilization in Brazil localities manifested independent life, initiative, a desire to control their own destinies and a sense of rivalry. This is to be seen in the jealousies that existed between the regions that afterward developed into states; in the insurrections of Pernambuco and of Minas Geraes; in the feuds between the Paulists and the *emboabas*;\* in the tendency manifested in one or another locality to criticize, and to hold aloof from, Rio de Janeiro, the city that was to become the federal capital. Both during the colonial period and under the empire—which was a prolongation of the Portuguese system with a throne in America—and from the establishment of the republic, local initiative and independence characterized the Brazilian people. Brazil is the only American republic, except the United States, that does not have a national ministry or department of instruction with absolute administrative powers. The several states enjoy, and make effective use of, a considerable degree of autonomy, and every state has its own institutions of instruction, while within each state are similar institutions maintained by municipalities, towns or communities, under the supervision of the state government.

On the other hand, the federal government performs a function in supplying and administering instruction: through the Ministerio de Justicia e Negocios Interiores it controls the institutions of instruction of the federal district, which includes Rio de Janeiro; it maintains a number of important institutions for professional and technical instruction in different cities of the republic; it supports and administers the schools of the territory of Acre: all primary or secondary; and, through the recently constituted Conselho Superior de Instrução, it brings together once or twice a year the heads of institutions for conference in Rio de Janeiro. It may be said that the Conselho Superior de Instrução also serves the republic in much the same manner as our Bureau of Education.

In all the countries of middle and southern America official instruction is gratuitous, from the primary schools through the university, including professional and technical institutions. One of the first shocks sustained by

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\*"Stranger," "outsiders," "base fellows:" according to Rio Branco (*Equisse de l'histoire du Brésil*), *emboaba* was derived from the Guarani word *amo*, "far," "far off," "at a distance," and *aba*, "man," so that *emboaba* would be a "man from afar," an outsider."

students from these countries when they come to the United States to study in our colleges, universities or technical schools is that occasioned by the requirement of tuition.

### III

#### SOURCES OF INSPIRATION AND EQUIPMENT

The first sources of inspiration and equipment were, naturally, the mother-countries. For more than two centuries the colonies were but projections in America of Spain and Portugal. The policy of the crown and of the papal authorities, the isolation of the overseas possessions and the barrier of language prevented the influx of extra-peninsular ideas. The peoples were as nearly *incomunicados* as jealous governmental vigilance and remoteness from alien influences could make them. By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, the weakening of the mother-countries and the consequent relaxing of watchfulness, together with the increased economic strength of the colonies, the development of a separatist consciousness and character, and the hostility of the creoles, civilized *mestizos*, Indians, mulattos, negroes and *zambos* toward the resident peninsular Spaniards and Portuguese rendered important groups in each of the countries hospitable to non-Iberian ideas. French and English books began to make their way southward. Being contraband, they were all the more ardently sought and cherished.

The struggle for and the attainment of independence in the United States and the events of the French revolution awakened a glow of hope and expectation from the Rio Grande and the Antilles to the strait of Magellan. Notions of autonomy and even of independence began to be entertained. With the acquisition of political independence, evolution in every direction began. Naturally, its advance was not parallel; but the stripling republics—vacillating and halting—began to experiment, sought to orientate themselves. By 1840 divergencies became evident. The play of non-Iberian intellectual influences manifested themselves here and there. Beginning with, say, 1850, and extending the analysis to the present time, it seems possible to group the republics according to the sources of inspiration and equipment.

Before attempting a distribution on the basis of the direct influence of non-Iberian ideas on official instruction, we must recognize that the strongest non-Iberian intellectual and artistic influence exerted on the middle and southern countries of America was that of France. France has projected herself upon the world, not, I believe, by effort, by direct national, institutional or individual propaganda, but in spite of a lack of national intent and effort and even in spite of a certain superciliousness and scorn, which are characteristic of the attitude of France toward non-Gallic peoples and things.

It is not unnatural to suppose that one of the chief reasons of the ascendancy of French ideas in the countries we are discussing is to be found in the ease with which the French language can be acquired by those whose native tongue is Spanish or Portuguese. Too much importance can hardly be given to this factor. People are prone to take the easier of several roads that lead from their localities out into the larger world. If to this ease of access, the road seems more interesting, the direction of the excursion is assured. Not only was the French language easier to our southern neighbors, but French thought and culture seemed to them more romantic, more Latin, and hence more comprehensible. The English and German languages have always been pretty solid barriers; they are not readily learned by those of Spanish or Portuguese speech. French philosophy, French literature, French art and French ideas of education began to be wrought into the fabric of the several civilizations soon after freedom was attained; and whenever texts, not in the vernacular, have been introduced, they have invariably been in French. French texts are not translated, as a rule; while, in the few cases in which English, German or Italian texts have been used, they have been translated.

This is a general statement as to French influence and is applicable to all the peoples, although in a varying degree: in some, French influence has been less marked than in others.

I now offer a rough grouping of the nations.

1. Those in which the influence of France has not only dominated, but has been almost the sole extra-Iberian influence in the realm of official instruction, are the following: Colombia, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Salvador, Honduras. This influence is seen most strongly in the



philosophy of instruction; in the organization of the *colegios*, *institutos* and *liceos*, modeled on the French *lycees*; in the tendency toward encyclopedism, rather than toward specialization; in emphasis on the practical in primary and secondary instruction; and in the equipment of laboratories. In the material equipment of schools of lower grade, that is, in desks and seats, we see not infrequently the influence of the United States.

Inasmuch as Haiti belonged to France, and as the language of the people is French, almost no other foreign influence is perceivable. French influence on the institutions of the Dominican Republic has been strong, both because of its proximity to Haiti, and for the reasons already given above. Since the occupation by the United States, however, our influence has been felt on instruction.

Within the last fifteen years Ecuador has received not a little impress from the United States, due to the influence of one or two commanding personalities.

Mexico, owing to her proximity and to the fact that many Mexicans have been educated in the United States, has incorporated not a few of our ideas. The tendency, in spite of the strained relations that have existed between the United States and Mexico during the past decade, seems to be to incorporate elements more and more approximating those that have proven valuable in our primary and secondary instruction.

French influence greatly predominates in Venezuela. It is manifest, not only in the schools of primary and secondary instruction, but also and especially in the professional and technical institutions. Not only are the laboratories of the medical schools supplied with French instruments and apparatus, but many of the texts are of French origin and in French, and many of the professors have been trained in France. After the breaking out of the recent war, however, Germans resident in Venezuela made a decided effort to have German ideas and practice introduced into the faculty of medicine of the Universidad Central in Caracas, and they met with some success. Some ten years ago a Venezuelan educator was sent to the United States to study methods of instruction. After his return to his country, he suggested certain changes in methods of instruction. Some of them were adopted by the ministry of public instruction, and they have been incorporated in the Venezuelan system. More recently there has been a tendency among the medical students



to seek instruction in Italy, and a number have spent two or three years at the Regia Università Degli Studi of Pisa.

Colombia and Bolivia, both somewhat isolated, in respect of the other nations, have developed on the foundation of primitive Spanish ideas, with few outside influences other than French.

Guatemala, Salvador and Honduras, in addition to French contributions, have been influenced mainly by our ideas and example.

2. The republics whose official instruction, in addition to French influences, seem to have been most strongly effected by our ideas are Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Cuba, Panama.

As early as 1850, the attention of Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, the greatest of the Argentine educators, became fixed on the United States as a source from which his country ought to draw in this respect. When he came to the United States as minister of Argentina in 1864, he made the acquaintance of Horace Mann, and he was deeply impressed by our school methods and particularly by the preparation given to teachers in our normal schools. When he returned to Argentina, he is said to have arranged for the introduction of some fifty well trained teachers from the United States. They were scattered throughout the republic, and they exerted a marked influence on instruction. Some of these teachers are still living in Argentina and they have made a good name for themselves and their country. The Universidad de La Plata, in the city of La Plata, the capital of the province of Buenos Aires, and but two hours from the city of Buenos Aires, is a new and well equipped institution modeled on our universities. The influence of the United States is very manifest in the six or eight admirably conducted agricultural schools and experiment stations of the country.

Unquestionably Sarmiento and the tendencies of official instruction in Argentina influenced Uruguay and Paraguay. Jose Pedro Varela, looked upon as the Horace Mann of Uruguay, published his famous *Educacion del pueblo* in 1874. It is saturated with the spirit and the thought of our leading educators. In the first chapter alone are quotations drawn from Daniel Webster, Horace Mann and William E. Channing. Its publication produced a deep impression on the national mind and marked a turning point in the history of official instruction in Uruguay. Within recent years a number of technical experts have

been introduced from the United States as professors, or as directors of institutions during their formative period. Some ten years ago Jesse Hopkins of the United States went to Montevideo to become physical director of the Young Men's Christian Association there. After he had been in Uruguay for some months, the minister of public instruction appointed him physical director of the republic, giving him *carte blanche*, with the result that physical training throughout the republic was so changed, and so many of our methods, apparatus, exercises and games have been introduced, that one can hardly distinguish the more highly developed Uruguayan school and playground from those of a similar character in the United States.

The influence of the United States on Paraguay has been somewhat indirect, through Argentina and Uruguay, and through the impression produced on a number of Paraguayans that have attended our universities and completed their studies here.

I have already alluded to Peru, where not only has the influence of the United States been felt for two decades, but where at the present time radical changes are being made to shape the whole educational system after ours. The rector of one of the oldest institutions of America, the Universidad del Cuzco, in Peru, is a Pennsylvanian and a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. The Universidad del Cuzco, which ministers to a large part of Peru that is entirely isolated from Lima, has been influenced to its foundations by the presence and thought of the persistent and sturdy Yankee.

We hardly need to be reminded that, on the achievement of her independence, Cuba was under the tutelage and direction of the United States for two years, and that the whole spirit and method of official instruction then underwent a radical change in harmony with the general tendencies of our system.

Unofficially, but none the less really, a similar development took place in the republic of Panama from her birth.

Costa Rica and Nicaragua have received very considerable contributions from the United States through representatives of those nations that have studied here, and through the influence of a number of our teachers that were employed by the Costa Rican and Nicaraguan governments.

3. Brazil, in this respect, as in that of local autonomy, initiative and administration, occupies a place apart. Naturally, the first influences were Portuguese; the next were French. The French language is almost as common among cultivated people in Brazil as Portuguese. Many Brazilian authors write a book in French for every one in Portuguese, and the influence of France on all the aspects of intellectual life is marked. Owing, however, to the very considerable influx of Italian and German immigration, Italian and German thought have exercised not a little influence on the Brazilian people. I think, however, that outside of schools maintained by the Italian-speaking and German-speaking communities, few Italian or German elements have been incorporated in official instruction.

4. Chile, like Brazil, occupies a place by herself. Owing to her isolation and her strongly individualistic character, the initial, dominantly Spanish influences endured longer in her case than elsewhere, and they developed along strongly nationalistic lines. The first outside influence, apart from the pervasive French thought, which seems to have penetrated her institutions less than those of the other republics, was that which came from Argentina, with the great Argentine expatriates, Sarmiento, Alberdi, Mitre and Echeverria, who spent some time in Chile and whose ideas found fertile soil there. A still greater foreign influence was that of the peerless Venezuelan, Andres Bello, who, after a few years spent in Europe—on the continent and in England—took up his abode in Chile. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Universidad de Chile and in the codification of the laws. His was the greatest literary, rhetorical, linguistic and pedagogical influence exerted on the whole of South America, and his ideas deeply affected Chilean institutions of instruction.

Some sixty years ago there was a strong influx of Germans, and, later, of German thought, into Chile; and the Instituto Pedagogica, the teachers' college of the Universidad de Chile, was shaped by Germans. The German influence was at its height during the decade that preceded the breaking out of the great war. It seems to have declined since then.

English influence has also been strong in Chile in the navy and in the training of naval officers ever since the time of Admiral Cochrane and the struggle for inde-



pendence. This influence has been heightened by the residence of a number of prominent families of British origin and by the commercial methods of British subjects. For more than a decade, however, Chile has been steadily turning to the United States for ideas of instruction. Several commissions have been sent to this country to study our institutions, and a number of Chileans that now occupy prominent positions in educational institutions were trained here. Some of the school equipment was manufactured in the United States. I myself have examined school desks that were imported into Chile from the United States forty-five years ago. They are still in perfect condition, without stain or mark of penknife, which speaks well for the sense of propriety or the inhibitions of Chilean boys. Can you imagine that would be the state of a school desk that might have been in constant use for forty-five years anywhere in the United States?

#### IV

### THE EXTENT OF OFFICIAL INSTRUCTION

Misconceptions regarding the middle and southern republics of America are rife among us. These nations are commonly conceived of as a block; we assume that by calling them "Latin-American" we have described them; and they present themselves to our average consciousness as a more or less homogeneous whole. They must be separated and analyzed individually, with due regard to their diversity, based on many factors, past and present.

Probably in no respects have these republics been more misunderstood than in those of the quality and extent of instruction and of the obstacles that have been and still are encountered in one or another country by those responsible for official instruction.

As I have already said, instruction seems to be as ample and thorough within certain groups in the several countries as it is within groups of the same character in the United States. The extent of these groups and their relation to the whole population vary with the country. The groups or portions of the population that I have in mind consist of Europeans and their descendants, and of the *mestizos*, Indians, mulattos, negroes or *zambos* that



have lived in close relations with Europeans or their descendants, all of whom together constitute the enlightened elements of the nations. Outside of this group or portion are the many Indians and other racial elements that are wholly illiterate, more or less isolated, not interested in education, lacking in ambition, impervious, stolid, hostile. The numbers of these portions of the populations vary greatly according to the country. It is their attitude that has not been appreciated by our people, and it is regarding it that most nonsense has been spoken and written in this country. Our travelers, our ill informed but venturesome writers of books, our journalists and even persons in high places among us have assumed that the administrations of the different republics under discussion ought to have made provisions for the instruction of all these uneducated elements, that if they do not make such provision they are blameworthy, that all the elements of each nation are immediately capable of being educated, in the sense in which we use the word, and, indeed, that they are clamoring for and being denied instruction.

The facts, as I see them, are that all the governments and all the leaders of thought in the middle and southern countries of America are as thoroughly convinced of the wisdom and justice of extending popular instruction to the whole people as our government and our leaders of thought; that serious and persistent effort has been and is being made to this end; that in many of the countries it is impossible to extend instruction of any kind to all the people, both because some of the republics lack the necessary funds, and because, owing to the isolation of numerous elements of the population and to their indifference or hostility to instruction, they are still unreachable by any means known to man.

In order that this aspect of the question may be appreciated, and that we may become aware of the extent of instruction, I now offer a brief analysis of the populations. It will be seen that the extent and quality of instruction depends on the proportion of European or slightly diluted European stock that exists in each country. I group the countries as follows:

1. Those in which the European stock prevails, and which are characterized by intellectual and social solidarity, easy and rapid means of communication and transportation, a common language, and, consequently, a wide

diffusion of instruction. They are Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Cuba, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Panama.

(a) Argentina, with a population of approximately 9,000,000 inhabitants, possesses a vastly greater proportion of European stock than the United States of America. It has about 18,000 aboriginal or uncivilized Indians, about 50,000 civilized Indians, a few hundred negroes of pure blood, probably 100,000 mulattos (persons with less negro than white blood) and some 200,000 persons with an admixture of Indian blood. Most of the republic is accessible by railways, water transportation or good highways; schools are widely disseminated; there are six universities, the largest of which has about 8,000 students; a number of normal schools, provincial colleges, professional schools, well equipped and highly efficient agricultural colleges, hundreds of newspapers, scores of public libraries.

(b) In the population of Uruguay, the proportion of European stock is even higher than in Argentina; the country is compact, practically all parts are accessible and covered with railways; and official instruction is more widely disseminated than in any other country of middle or southern America. There is a school for every 128 children, and adequate provision is made for the imparting of instruction of every kind required by an enlightened people.

(c) Although the proportion of indigenes in Chile, particularly in the provinces of the extreme north, is higher than in Argentina and Uruguay, and although, owing to the peculiar topography of the country, there are parts that are still inaccessible, European stock prevails; official instruction is highly developed and efficient, and it is possible to extend it to all the elements of the population within a few decades.

(d) Although the proportion of European stock in Cuba is less than in the three countries just mentioned, the population is so dense, the economic condition of the republic has been so satisfactory and all regions are so accessible, that instruction is widely diffused, well administered and readily capable of being carried to all the people. There are practically no indigenes or isolated groups.

(e) In Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Panama the European elements prevail, instruction is widely dissemi-

nated and the problem of ministering to a large impervious population does not exist.

2. Those in which the European elements are in the minority, and in which, owing to lack of racial homogeneity and a common language, and to what may be termed "mass impenetrability," as well as to a dearth of means of communication and transportation, the problem of instruction is difficult to solve. They are Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, Haiti. This classification is in no sense a reflection on the republics of this list: they vary greatly among themselves and their one common characteristic, in respect of official instruction, is the difficulty of reaching the whole mass of their populations.

(a) Many of the best schools of America are to be found in Brazilian centers of population along the seaboard. In certain regions, however, there are aboriginal masses that have not been, and can not readily be, approached. Both the national government and the state governments are making commendable efforts to carry instruction to all the people, but it is still materially impossible to do so, both because the outlay of funds would be too great, and because the nature of the indigenes is such as would render it necessary not only to establish schools and provide teachers, but also to maintain an army of soldiers or policemen to compel interest in and attendance on instruction.

(b) Mexico, Peru and Bolivia afford striking illustrations of the imperviousness of the indigenous elements of the populations; add to this factor the physical conditions of these countries, which cause the isolation of numerous groups, and you have the explanation of conditions that have existed since the conquest. The school authorities of these republics have had to face and they continue to face insuperable difficulties. Means do not exist on earth to educate large masses of the populations of these countries; time, with the rearing of new and gradually altered generations, can alone solve the problem. A single illustration will suffice, as it is characteristic. Among the Cora Indians of the Sierra del Nayarit in Mexico, I found, in the village of La Mesa, which consisted of about five hundred Indians, a well built school-house, with a Mexican teacher, apparently of Spanish blood, kept there by the federal government. He was intelligent and he seemed to be conscientious. He confessed to being well paid, and, although remote from the world, he said he would be con-



tent with his lot, if he could only make any impression on the Indians. There were, according to his estimate, a hundred children in the community that ought to be in school. The enrolment was eight, and the average attendance five. He was the father of eight children; they were all enrolled as pupils; and the average attendance was contributed by his family. He lamented the situation and deplored the impenetrability of the Indians, saying—to quote his impressive words—“As many soldiers as there are children would be necessary to make them go to school.”

This lack of interest, this persistence of racial traits and habits, this hostility to the “white man’s foolishness”—as an old Indian chief put it to me—is all characteristic of the American indigenes wheresoever found to-day, and those that have not faced the difficulty personally can form no conception of its gravity.

(c) The situation in Haiti is similar to the one with which we are familiar in some parts of South Carolina, Mississippi and Louisiana, where the negro population is densest. There is, however, a difference between the conditions in Haiti and in these communities. In our South the negroes, of all types, occupations and localities, share the general economic vigor of the United States; they are constantly stimulated to physical and mental exertion by the people and institutions of their localities; and they live in a less enervating climate than that of Haiti. It may be assumed therefore that the method of giving adequate instruction to the whole population of this republic will continue to be one of the most difficult of American problems.

3. The countries in which, although the European elements are more numerous than in the second group, the situation is still complicated by the presence of a considerable mass of impenetrable population. They are Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Paraguay, Honduras, Salvador, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic. Conditions vary among these countries, and each of them might well be studied in detail, if time permitted. Colombia and Ecuador still have many untaught and inaccessible indigenes; in Venezuela, Paraguay and other republics of this group, the problem is mainly one of inertia on the part of the uneducated elements, rather than of inaccessibility or fixed hostility. They present no difficulty that



can not be solved by energetic effort, since the indigenous elements are inconsiderable.

A word should be added regarding the difference between the problem of the education of Indians that live in isolated communities and that of the education of our Southern negroes. I speak now of the Indians that have survived in the parts of America we are studying. It may be said that the higher types of the aborigines have disappeared, due to numerous causes that may not now be enumerated. Those that remain and that live in their primitive isolation may be considered the residue, the leavings, who were too indifferent, too supine and too weak for conflict and destruction or for assimilation. They have never been brought into intellectual relationship with Europeans or their institutions. Our negroes, on the other hand, have all passed through the disciplinary process of intimate life with white people. They, in the persons of their ancestors, were distributed among the whites and subjected to a species of training; and for generations they have been surrounded by civilizing influences. Above all, they speak and understand English. Many millions of the Indians do not speak or understand the language of their white neighbors, that is, of the dominating elements of the countries in which they live. They are still as remote from European ideas and civilization as they were four hundred years ago.

## V

### THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION; TENDENCIES AND RESULTS

Instruction, as a rule, has been more encyclopedic, more theoretical, more artistic, more literary; less practical, less technical, less addressed to the business of earning a livelihood, than in the United States.

Attention is at once attracted to the non-academic character of university professors. Above the normal school, there exists no teaching profession. Almost without exception, the professors are physicians, lawyers, administrative officers of the governments, ecclesiastics, engineers; in short, professional men that earn their living in their several professions, but who, for one reason or another, devote a small portion of their time to instruction in the institutions maintained by the governments. While the disadvantages of such a condition of things is evident,

it is supposed that such instructors, by rubbing elbows constantly with the hard realities of life, are less academic and hence better guides than ours for the young.

From the normal school down, the teachers are thoroughly trained, and teaching is regarded as a career. There are good normal schools in almost all the countries; those of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Peru, Cuba, Chile and Costa Rica are noteworthy.

The theory is good everywhere; for the modern schools of most of the countries compare favorably with ours; there is a tendency, however, to overelaborateness in laboratory equipment. At any rate, one gets the impression that occasionally the numerous fine instruments and apparatus one generally encounters are not sufficiently comprehended and utilized by the teaching staffs.

## VI

### METHODS OF COÖPERATION

I have been asked to make suggestions in respect of coöperation. Among our educators there is a very perceptible and lively interest in coöperating with the other peoples of America. What can we do? What shall we do? What are the points of contact? Have we something to offer? Is there something we can learn from our neighbors? If so, what are the channels of approach, what are the vehicles of transmission?

It has seemed to me that, for all our good intentions, as a people, we are still far removed from our neighbors of Spanish and Portuguese speech. We have a long road to travel before we shall be ready for coöperation. A change of heart and mind and point of view and attitude is necessary. We need, first of all, a deep and persistent and patient interest; then, knowledge, intimate knowledge, knowledge based on reading, travel, thought, a surmounting of the barrier of language, the comprehension of different psychologies, and, above all, the understanding of divers backgrounds, of the difficulties our neighbors have had to meet, of the road by which they have come to their present estate.

The situation is delicate. Those that have represented us have expressed us badly. Many travelers from our midst, with the best of intentions, have seemed to go as

imparters, bestowers, as condescending disseminators of information and of the superior wealth of our civilization, rather than as sympathetic observers and students. We must right ourselves, and it may take as long to do so as it has taken to wrong ourselves.

We hear much of the exchange of professors and students. The practical effecting of exchanges is attended with difficulties, although none may be insuperable. Few professors, either of our country or of the other American countries, are properly equipped for such exchanges. Professors of ours that are capable of imparting knowledge in Spanish or Portuguese are, with few exceptions, to be found in the departments of Romance languages. What they can give is what our southern neighbors already have in superior quantity and quality. They do not desire that we shall teach them Spanish or Portuguese or that we shall lecture to them on Spanish or Portuguese literature. They would welcome our educators, our historians, our psychologists and sociologists, our economists, our engineers, our physicians, our jurisconsults; but in their presence such are dumb, except through the cumbersome and uninspiring means of interpreters.

Our neighbors are in much the same plight, although they are better qualified than we, since most of their instructors are, as I have said, professional men or men of affairs, and some of them are quite capable of lecturing in English.

The so-called exchange of students is, in the main, not an exchange, looked at from our point of view. We assume that most of the students would come from the other countries to the United States; few of our students entertain the idea of studying in the other American countries. It might be as well to drop the phrase "exchange of students," and limit ourselves to welcoming such students as come to us from the other American countries, to making them feel at home, to surrounding them with the most helpful influences: influences that shall express to them the best of our civilization.

Reason and the experience of many individuals and institutions seem to demonstrate the unwisdom of our seeking to induce adolescent students to come to the United States to study. It is natural to suppose that those that are to be the future citizens of countries should receive their first education among their own people, that they should remain among them until their characters be



formed, lest they be denationalized by residence and study abroad and return to their homes unfitted to comprehend, and to participate in, the national life. Mature students may well be encouraged to come to us and be accorded all possible opportunities.

Probably one of the easiest and most productive methods of interamerican coöperation would be the establishment of contact through technical institutions—schools of engineering, agricultural colleges and experiment stations, medical schools, et cetera. A thorough knowledge of the language of the particular country is not so necessary when students are doing things together: contact, which is the essential thing, is thereby made possible and necessary during long periods of companionship, experimentation and coöperation.

More important, however, than all avowed and direct effort are knowledge, appreciation and good will. The intellectual leaders of peoples, and especially the educators, hold in their hands the shaping of international relations: when once the leaders of thought in all the American countries are really aroused to the need and possibility of better acquaintance and coöperation; when all the nations of America shall seem as important to the people of each nation as their own nation herself, there will be no necessity of discussion or of getting together; we shall already be together as one people.



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